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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the relationships between superintendents' management behavior and the frequency of grievances initiated by secondary teachers; the dependent variable was also tested against the rule administration behavior of secondary principals and the "mix" of behaviors at both management levels. The sample employed for hypotheses confirmation consisted of 319 secondary principals, teachers, and teacher union representatives in 27 nonurban districts. Analysis of the data indicates that superintendents exhibiting openness experience fewer grievances; closed superintendents, more grievances. Further, in the latter case, a subordinate representative principal tends to screen some of the perceived superintendent closedness and effectively lowers grievance frequency. (Author)

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The Relationship Between the Management Performance Characteristics of Superintendents and the Frequency of Teacher-Initiated Grievances

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Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationships between superintendents' management behavior as perceived by secondary principals and the frequency of grievances initiated by secondary school teachers. A major concern was to investigate those management behaviors of superintendents and secondary school principals which may be predicted to affect the frequency of grievances being initiated by secondary school teachers.

Conceptual-Theoretical Framework

Three significant concepts have been explored for developing a thorough understanding of the problem. These concepts included: (1) leadership style and behavior, (2) rules and rule administration, and (3) conflict.

Utilizing a model similar to that formulated by Rensis Likert (1967), management performance for superintendents was classified on a continuum from

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authoritarian, or closed behavior, to participative, or open management behavior. A rule administration model proposed by Alvin Gouldner (1954) was utilized to determine relationships between secondary principals' rule administration and the frequency of grievances. Gouldner's model identifies representative, mock, and punishment-centered as characteristic managerial behavior types for middle management personnel.

The dependent variable identified for this study was conflict. While conflict in schools has not been lacking, school management has been somewhat lax in providing a channel for conflict resolution. Collective bargaining more than any other reason has provided the impetus for schools to develop a grievance procedure for institutionalization of conflict resolution. As a consequence, conflict in schools has become more openly exposed.

Much effort has been expended in attempts to identify and analyze influence relationships within organization structure. Recent emphasis has been directed toward a more thorough understanding of organizational behavior by observing and studying the management behavior of incumbents who occupy positions of influence and control within the organizational hierarchy. Research in industrial settings has attempted to yield insights into the influence of management and leadership behavior on the total organization.

McGregor (1960), operating from the base that management is a profession, contended that any manager's influence on organizational behavior begins with his perception of the environs in which he functions and a philosophy about

the nature of the people who populate the organization. Based on these assumptions of management regarding the nature of people, McGregor defined his Theory X and Theory Y. The nature of man in relation to his work is implied in these models, the former based on a positive, humanistic view of management toward workers and the latter founded largely on negative dispositions toward man and his capabilities.

McGregor (1960) argued that the realization of human needs can be suffocated by organizations predisposed with task orientation, resulting in individual frustration. Argyris (1964) further explicated the point, suggesting that organizations may be the source and cause of individual problems. The major thesis of Argyris' work is the dichotomy of individual needs and organizational needs. He reasoned in the Mix Model that individual needs and organizational objectives can be integrated. In this venture of integration, leadership style and mutual supportiveness assume extreme importance.

Likert (1961) also advocated that organizations become more cognizant of human resources and potentialities. Likert contended that one's style of managing can have discernible influence on subordinates within the organization. The principle of interaction-influence stressed the need for individual participation in decision making, with greater involvement effecting a higher level of group commitment and orientation to task. It was in this regard that Likert (1961) conceptualized a continuum of leadership styles. Likert's Systems are:

System 1: Exploitive-Authoritative

System 2: Benevolent-Authoritative

System 3: Consultative

System 4: Participative-Group

Gouldner's (1954) study provided insight into the interactions between management and the individuals within the work organization. Concern with management's development and application of rules and their subsequent effect on workers within the organization resulted in the identification of mock, representative, and punishment-centered styles of rule administration, (Ibid., p. 215). It appears that a superior's behavior with regard to his manner of rule administration has consequences on the behavior of others within the organization.

Research in the industrial setting has parallels in educational research. A variety of frameworks were proposed for the study of administrative behavior in schools. A widely recognized and useful framework for the analysis of administrative behavior is the social systems approach developed for education by Getzels and Guba (Winter, 1957). This model considers the notion that leadership is a social process under the influence of two basic dimensions. The nomothetic dimension refers to demands of the organization, while the ideographic dimension alludes to individual needs and goals. Administrative behavior may follow one of three general patterns; namely, the nomothetic style, the ideographic style, or the transactional style. The latter style acknowledges the two dimensions to be interdependent and postulates that the realization of school goals is manifested in the satisfaction of individual needs.

A distinct interrelatedness exists between one's job satisfaction, rules, administration of rules, and conflict. The fact that human needs are inherent to

job satisfaction has been clearly demonstrated. Just as clearly, conflict is likely to arise between individual needs, and rules and regulation. Conflict study assumes significance in terms of its effect on organizational behavior and equilibrium. Undoubtedly, conflict contributes to the maintenance, adjustment, or adaptation of educational institutions. Coser (1956, p. 154) states that conflict within a group frequently helps to revitalize existent norms, or it contributes to the emergence of new norms.

Individual-organization conflict is endemic to organizations because of the polarization and inevitable collision of the organization's goals and the needs of the individuals. This cause of conflict has been elucidated by Blau and Myers (1971, pp. 71-73) as the type conflict that is so often manifested when teachers strike, file grievances, and so on. As Lutz, Kleinman, and Evans (1967, p. 74) have suggested, most grievances concern a disagreement between a staff member and his immediate superordinate. Intergroup conflict generally is a challenge to a given principle of hierarchy within the organization. Clear and Seager (1971, p. 61) state that administrators' zones of desired influence are consistently greater than the teachers' zones of acceptance; this is a fertile bed for conflict.

Conflict can be depicted on a functional-dysfunctional continuum. The points on this continuum relate to levels or degrees of job satisfaction and performance. The message to practicing administrators is that wholesome conflict is essential to the positive evolution of the educational organization. Coser (1956, p. 39) viewed conflict as performing group maintenance functions. The wholesomeness of conflict depends to a large degree on the leadership behavior of the

administrators. Institutionalized procedures encourage conflict within acceptable parameters and present educational administrators with leverage for improvement of the educational organization.

Related Research

Lutz and Evans (1968) employed the Gouldner model in the educational setting and were successful in operationalizing the management behavior of principals as perceived by teachers with regard to the administration of rules within the school. In the field study, punishment-centered behavior always created tension and general hostility, even in warm leadership climates. While punishment-centered behavior was present in both climates, the researchers predictably found this behavior more frequently in the hostile climate. Additionally Lutz and Evans (1968) noted, as did Gouldner, two other important aspects of rule administration -- "The use of a rule by a principal to mask his authority will reduce tension or an occurrence of a punishment-centered behavior, and close supervision is usually viewed by teachers as punishment-centered behavior, (Ibid., p. 150)." Perhaps the most significant finding of the field study by Lutz and Evans (1968) was that representative bureaucracy appeared to be the most important single factor in determining positive relationships between management and staff within a school.

Recognizing the implications of the rule administration behavior of the principal, several researchers have undertaken subsequent studies. Caldwell and McDannel (1973) employed the Rule Administration Scales on the elementary school level to measure the relationship between the principal's rule administration

behavior and the teachers' perception of the principal's leadership ability and the teachers' militancy. On the secondary level, Caldwell and Spaulding (1973) conducted a similar investigation. Both of these investigations hypothesized that particular rule administration behavior patterns of principals would be related to teacher perception of the principal's leadership ability and teacher militancy.

A significant relationship was found on both levels between punishment-centered rule administration behavior and teachers' perception of low professional leadership on the part of the principal. A significant relationship was also found between representative-centered rule administration behavior and teachers' perception of high professional leadership. With regard to mock rule administration behavior, it was reported that mock behavior as exhibited by principals was highly related to teacher's perception of low principal professional leadership ability. These investigations provided a rationale for the behavior of principals with regard to the administration and enforcement of rules toward the professional staff.

Caldwell and Easton (1974) studied the relationship between the superintendent's management behavior and the teachers' perception of the principal's rule administration behavior. Findings implied that the superintendent's behavior, as a higher level management position than the principal level, is more likely to serve as a focal point for staff militancy, in that the superintedent's behavior is more closely associated with district policies and actions, including collective bargaining.

These findings provided initial parameters for the study of the overall impact of administrative behavior on teacher attitudes including teacher militancy.

Consequently, the major thrust of this investigation was to examine the relationship between the number of teacher-initiated grievances as a measure of intra-organizational conflict and three indices of leadership behavior of upper echelon school administrators: (1) the perceived management profile of school superintendents, (2) the perceived rule administration of secondary school principals, and (3) a "mix" of the behavior indices of superintendents and principals.

Therefore, the following hypotheses were based upon the previously reported findings to investigate the relationship between (1) the manner in which school administrators; namely, superintendents and principals, administer schools, and (2) the frequency of grievances in secondary schools.

Hypothesis #1 - There is an inverse relationship between the participative management behavior of the superintendent and the frequency with which grievances are initiated by teachers in the secondary schools under his direction.

Hypothesis #2 - There is a positive relationship that exists between the exploitive-authoritarian management style of the superintendent and the frequency with which grievances are initiated by teachers in the secondary schools under his direction.

Hypothesis #3 - The highest frequency of grievances will occur in secondary schools with punishment-centered principals working under exploitive-authoritarian superintendents.

Hypothesis #4 - The lowest frequency of grievances will occur in secondary schools with representative principals working under participative superintendents.

The Sample

The sample utilized in this investigation consisted of 27 public secondary schools in Pennsylvania. The schools constituting the sample were selected from communities largely classified as suburban and rural with student population ranging from 315 to 1,174.

The total sample included 27 principals and 268 secondary teachers. Principals completed a Profile of Management Characteristics instrument indicating their perceptions of the superintendent. Teachers were randomly selected to complete a Rule Administration Scale quantifying their perceptions of the building principal's rule administration. A Grievance Survey form was completed by the local teachers' association faculty representative for each secondary school building in the sample.

Instrumentation

Data for this investigation were collected by means of three separate instruments: (1) the Grievance Survey, (2) the Rule Administration Scale, and (3) the Profile of Management Characteristics.

The Grievance Survey was developed as a vehicle designed to quantify grievance data for the study; i.e., the number of grievances initiated by teachers within a span of time. Validity of each grievance was determined by having the teacher representative completing the form briefly discuss the nature of the complaint and the extent and outcome of each grievance.

The Rule Administration Scales were developed by Caldwell and McDannel (1973) and Caldwell and Spaulding (1973) in order to quantify the teachers' perception of the rule administration behavior of their respective principals as this behavior affects staff. Three sub-scales comprised the questionnaire: (1) Representative, (2) Mock, and (3) Punishment-centered. Each sub-scale provided an index of teachers' perceptions of principal's behavior with regard to rule enforcement. These scales were developed using the Guttman scaling technique for each sub-scale with the following reproducibility coefficients reported: Caldwell-McDannel: .913, .879, and .875, respectively; Caldwell-Spaulding: .903, .914, and .920, respectively.

The Profile of Management Characteristics was originally adapted from Likert's Management Behavior Scale (Likert, 1967) by Caldwell and Easton (1974) for specific application in secondary schools. This scale provided a continuum of management behavior which included four indices: (1) Exploitive-Authoritative (or, closed), (2) Benevolent-Authoritative, (3) Consultative, and (4) Participative-Group (or, open). Guttman's Lambda-3 Index of Reliability was 0.923, while the Coefficient of Alpha Index of Reliability for the instrument was 0.925.

Design

Basic statistical analyses were employed for the actual test of the relationship between the selected variables. The Likert Attitude Scale Analysis was selected to analyze the Profile of Management Characteristics. This analysis generated the mean score, the standard deviation, and indices of reliability.

Similarly, the Guttman Scaling Technique was utilized in analysis of the Rule Administration Scale.

Correlation coefficients indicated the quantitative relationship between the independent variables and the frequency of grievances. Partial correlation coefficients permitted an analysis of the relationship between the independent variables, either singly or in combination, and the frequency of grievances.

Multiple linear regression analysis was employed to summarize the linear dependence of one variable on other variables. Both sub-packages of the multiple linear regression program; namely, upward regression (UPREG) and downward regression (DNREG), were used to statistically analyze the relationships.

Each of the four hypotheses was tested in the null form utilizing appropriate statistical analyses to determine if the relationships predicted in the hypotheses were valid and statistically different from zero. In order to reject each null hypothesis a statistical significance at or beyond the .05 level of confidence was required.

Data Analysis

Hypotheses 1 and 2 - A central concern of this investigation was to ascertain the extent of the relationship between superintendents' participative-group management behavior and the frequency with which grievances are initiated by secondary teachers. The relationship between the variables was found to be significant beyond the .05 level of confidence, resulting in a rejection of the null hypotheses.

Both research hypotheses were accepted with a significant statistical level of confidence beyond .001. A partial coefficient of correlation figure of 0.2459 represented a positive relationship between closedness and the frequency of grievances. By assumptive analogy, therefore, an inverse relationship existed between the openness profile at the extreme opposite of the continuum, and the frequency of grievances. Figure 1 represents the graphic linear relationship between the superintendents' management profile and the frequency of grievances.

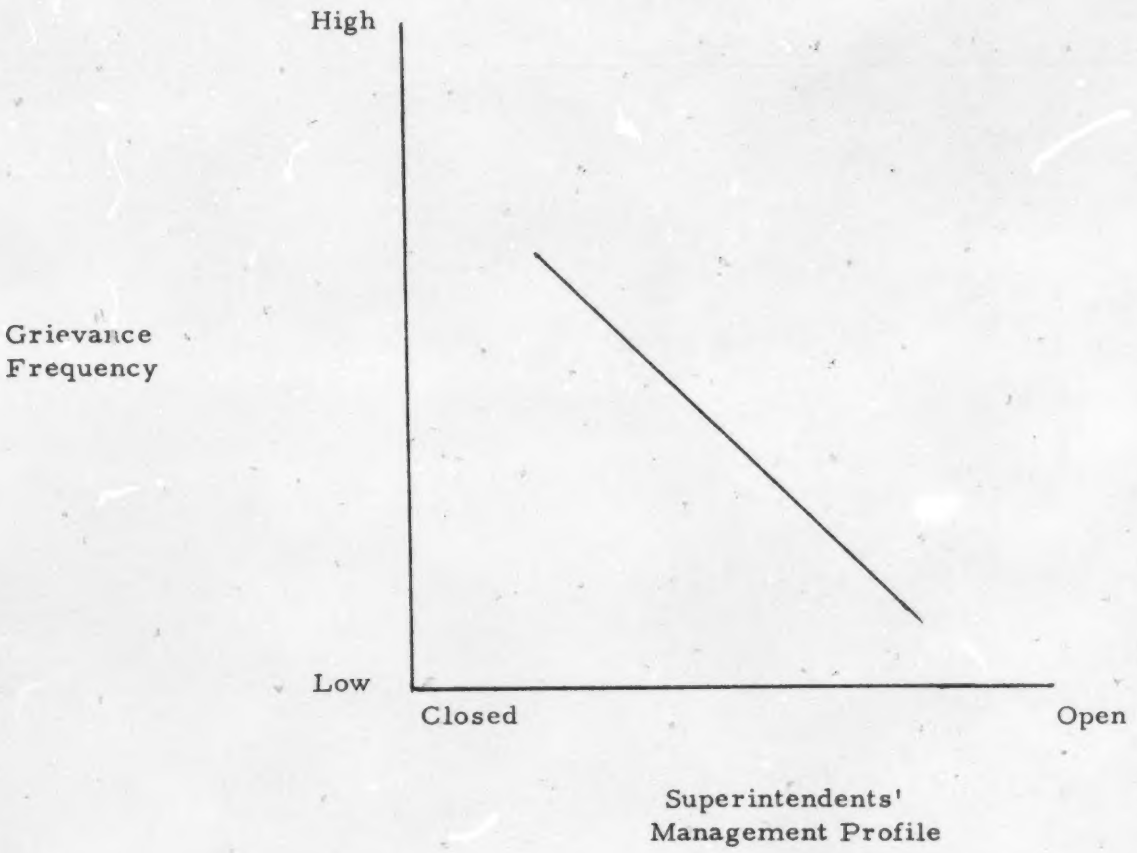

Figure 1. The Linear Relationship Between Superintendents' Management Profile and the Frequency of Grievances.

Hypothesis #3 - This hypothesis was designed to test the relationship between the "mix" of management behaviors which included the various facets of principals' rule administration behavior plus superintendents' profile of management characteristics, and the frequency of grievances initiated by teachers at the secondary level. A correlation coefficient of 0.2534 was obtained which was significant beyond the .05 level of confidence. This analysis revealed that when the representative and the mock variables were controlled, a significant correlation exists between the frequency of grievances and the joint occurrence of punishment-centered principal/exploitive-authoritarian superintendent behavior.

Hypothesis #4 - The final hypothesis suggested an expected relationship between a blend of management behaviors and the frequency of grievances. Data analysis produced a correlation coefficient of 0.2706 which was significant beyond the .05 level of confidence. This analysis revealed that when the mock and punishment-centered variables were controlled, a significant correlation existed between grievance frequency and the joint occurrence of representative principal and participative superintendent behavior.

Ancillary Finding

Further examination of the data revealed significant additional findings in five areas: (1) mean subscores of principals' rule administration behavior and the frequency of grievances, (2) the relative influence of each separate rule administration index and frequency of grievances, (3) generalizations of

contemporary principals' rule administration behavior, (4) the ideal management model for grievance reduction, and (5) patterns of homogeneity of management behavior within the administration of secondary schools.

The effects of principals' rule administration behavior on the frequency of grievances portrays (1) an inverse relationship between the principals' representative behavior and the frequency of grievances, and (2) a direct relationship between the principals' punishment-centered behavior and the frequency of grievances.

Principals were identified by teachers perceptions as being either representative or punishment-centered with not a single principal being perceived as mock. This indicates that contemporary principals are taking a stand on administrative matters.

Only 37 percent of the principals were perceived as approximating the behavior typifying the punishment-centered model. Evidently, a majority of teachers were not exposed to a disciplinary pattern in the normal routine of their work. As a consequence, and as evidenced by previous data, the teachers less frequently saw fit to involve the grievance machinery under the influence of this style regime.

The data substantiated the notion that rule administration behavior of principals and the management behavior of superintendents were significant among those conditions that effect variation in the frequency of grievances. The ideal model for reduction of grievances as indicated by this study would be a working combination of participative superintendents and representative principals.

Discussion

This investigation was an endeavor to examine particular relationships in the setting of educational organizations. Specifically, an effort was made to discover the relationships between selected behavior traits of public school administrators who occupy positions of leadership and influence in the school, and organizational conflict as measured by the frequency of grievances initiated by secondary teachers. The study primarily focused on the relationship between (1) superintendents' management behavior measured on a continuum of exploitive-authoritarian to participative group and (2) grievance frequency. A second concentration for this research was relative to the relationship between (1) teachers' perception of the manner in which principals administer organizational rules, and (2) the frequency of grievances initiated by teachers. Three indices of principals' behavior were measured, corresponding to the three styles of rule administration behavior: representative, punishment-centered, and mock. Finally an analysis of the total effect of management behavior on the frequency of grievances was ascertained. The data on individual behavior were gathered via subjective evaluations as perceived by immediate subordinates. Grievance data were collected by objective means from teacher representatives in each school.

Hypothesis #1 predicted a relationship between the degree of exploitive-authoritarian behavior of superintendents and the frequency of grievances. The second hypothesis was a corollary predicting a relationship between the participative-group management behavior of superintendents and a minimum level of grievance frequency. Both of these hypotheses were statistically supported in that a correlation

of 0.2459 was obtained between the superintendents' profile aggregate management score and grievance frequency. This correlation was significant beyond the .001 level of confidence.

Hypotheses #3 and 4 predicated directional relationships between combinations of superintendents' management behavior and the principals' rule administration behavior, and the frequency of grievances. The analysis for Hypothesis #3 revealed the following:

1. The correlation between principals' representative rule administration behavior and grievance frequency was found to be -0.2692, which was statistically significant beyond the .001 level.
2. When tested for a combination effect of superintendents' participative management behavior and principals' representative rule administration behavior on the frequency of grievances, a correlation coefficient of -0.2682 was revealed. This correlation was significant beyond the .001 level of confidence.

The analysis for Hypothesis #4 revealed findings just as definitive:

i. A correlation of 0.1486 was obtained between principals' punishment-centered rule administration behavior and grievance frequency. This finding was significant beyond the .01 level.

2. The analysis of the effect of the combination of superintendents' exploitive-authoritarian management behavior and principals' punishment-centered rule administration behavior on the frequency of grievances yielded a correlation of 0.1812. This correlation was significant beyond the .005 level of confidence.

The data clearly confirmed the relationship of superintendents' management behavior and the principals' administration of rules to the frequency of grievances initiated by secondary teachers.

Within the sample, the behavior of both the superintendent and the principal were significant as related to the frequency of teacher grievances. A slightly stronger inverse relationship existed between the principals' representative behavior and grievances. So if one were to consider what might be termed the "ideal" of representative behavior, it could be concluded that the contemporary principal still occupies the position of influence with respect to teachers.

However, the theoretical ideal model for representative behavior does not exist in actuality. A principal is, in fact, part representative, part mock, part punishment-centered, and varying in degree not only from one moment to the next, but from issue to issue and from teacher to teacher as well. It must be noted that the statistical relationship between grievance frequency and principals' punishment-centered rule administration was 0.1486. Further, the statistical relationship between mock rule administration behavior and grievance frequency

was only -0.1219. Consequently, the principal is considered as a blend of the three rule administration styles; the strength of the principal's effect over grievance frequency retains prominence but is probably less significant to grievance frequency than is the behavior of the superintendent.

Implications of Findings

Positive credence to the notion of superintendents' visibility in teacher-related affairs is gained by assessing the relative change in the various correlations under conditions of control. The data clearly affirmed the notion that the three variables of rule administration behavior had a significantly smaller effect on the relationship between superintendents' profile and the frequency of grievances than was the case when mock rule administration behavior, punishment-centered rule administration behavior, or the profile of management characteristics, were controlled either singly or in combination, relative to the relationship of the principals' representative rule administration and the frequency of grievances. In other words, the management behavior of the superintendent appeared to be a more constant factor, and more of a continuing influence on teacher-initiated grievances than was the representative rule administration behavior of the building principal.

It is reasonable to suggest the reliability of certain tenets, at least with regard to the relationship between the variables utilized in this study. It has already been shown in the study that both the variables of superintendents' management behavior and the rule administration behavior of principals contributed

significantly to the frequency of grievances originated in public schools. Further, it has been deduced that principals' representative behavior contributes to a greater absolute correlation with the dependent variable than did superintendents' profile. However, when consideration is given to the principals' composite rule administration behavior, the superintendents' profile is a more stable factor for predictability of grievance frequency. The nature of superintendents' profile of management characteristics assumed a greater permanence of predictable influence over the frequency of grievances initiated by secondary teachers.

One may prognosticate that schools will continue to be the target of societal inquiries and research studies. The implications of organizational dynamics and the ramifications of leadership behavior have been explicated by numerous investigators. The present investigation makes a strong case for the influence of the management role of the superintendent in contemporary teacher affairs. Under certain conditions, some shadow of a doubt has been cast upon the relative influence of the principal in these affairs. Such findings should serve as a catalyst for future studies related to administrative behavior within educational organizations.

Results and/or Conclusions

Analysis of the data indicated that there was a significant inverse relationship between the independent and dependent variables in Hypotheses #1 and 2 and significant findings in regard to Hypothesis #3 regarding the "total

administrative" climate. Of the four independent variables; namely, punishment-centered, mock , and representative, rule administration, and management profile, the latter two appear to be significantly most influential in the regression analyses and in accounting for variance.

Further, there is evidence of several interesting conclusions relative to the strengths of these two most significant independent variables. These are possible to ascertain by computer controlling of any one, two, or three independent variables and obtaining partial correlations indicating the interactions between and among those variables remaining. Briefly, the findings reveal the principals' representative rule administration behavior has the highest correlation with teacher grievances. Superintendent's management behavior also has a significant effect on grievance initiation and appears to be a more stable predictor of grievances notwithstanding the principals operational behavior in regard to rule administration.

Educational and Scientific Importance of the Study

Analysis of the data collected reveals findings in schools that parallel those in industrial settings concerning employee reactions to managerial actions. The effect of this leadership influence in schools is of significance since it is ultimately experienced by the school's prime clients, the pupils. The fact that the effects are internal, relatively stable, and yet subject to identification and resolution, make the findings of extreme importance to educational organizations.

The findings are also of value in providing insight into the effective and efficient operation of schools; the separation of fruitful from unwholesome conflict; meaningful extension of significant primary research; and the impact of this data on administrative training as well as the recruitment of administrators.

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